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Immediate Release

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Environment Department to "Fight BAC" During Food Safety Month

(Santa Fe, NM) — Although you can't see, smell or taste him, he's out there waiting to strike. He's "BAC" (bacteria) and the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has plans to use September (National Food Safety Month) to show the public how to battle him.

"NMED regulates food safety at every restaurant in the State of New Mexico outside the City of Albuquerque, so we are very familiar with fighting BAC," said Field Operations Division Director Ana Marie Ortiz. "We hope that our outreach efforts this month will show New Mexicans what we do to make sure they are safe when they eat out and what they can do to protect themselves at home."

To help spread the word, NMED is sponsoring various activities during food safety month.

New Mexico State Fair

Visitors to this year's State Fair will see something new, BAC Man and his BAC Mobile. This mobile display sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be at the fair September 11-14th. NMED food inspectors will be on hand offering hand washing lessons, educational videos, and food safety informational materials.

To ensure food safety at the fair, the more than 100 food vendors will be inspected at least five times each, every food vendor will have received required food training, and food inspectors will be on site each day. NMED is also sponsoring an educational exhibit in the Natural Resources Building and will offer food safety information to the 800,000 expected visitors passing through fair.

Public Schools in the Northeast

All 5th grade students in Raton will receive food safety training this month from NMED food inspectors as well as lessons on proper hand washing.

more

NMED Fights BAC

Page 2

9/8/03

Students in Santa Fe and Las Vegas schools will watch "Fight BAC" videos this month. "BAC Attack! How Our School Fought BAC for Food Safety" and "The Story of BAC" are designed for elementary students. Older students will view "The BAC Files" and "The Great Food Fight."

Las Cruces Area

NMED will provide five educational events at local Wal-Mart stores and at the Southern State Fair. Visitors will receive "Fight BAC" promotional items, food safety coloring books, and information on safe food handling procedures to implement in their kitchens at home. The events will be advertised via public service announcements.

Roswell Area

NMED will provide local newspapers with food safety "TIPS OF THE WEEK" for readers to implement into their own homes.

For further information contact Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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